

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for removing coverings laid on even surfaces, comprising:

(a) a support frame for mounting driving wheels about a rotational axis and for accommodating a motor and a gear for driving the driving wheels in a working direction,

(b) at least one support element arranged behind the driving wheels in the working direction, and

(c) a motor-driven separating knife, wherein for the movement of the apparatus opposite to the working direction the driving wheels are arranged for lifting off by tilting the support frame onto the at least one support element ~~with the separating knife pivoting about the rotational axis of the driving wheels, and~~

(d) supporting plates each being provided in the area of a respective driving wheel and being relatively movable to the support frame, wherein the motor-driven separating knife is fixed on the supporting plates and wherein each supporting plate comprises at least two pins arranged at the same distance toward the center of the axis of the driving wheels and engaging oblong holes formed in the support frame and having the shape of the segment of a circle for limiting the relative movement between the support frame and the supporting plates.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein at least one guide handle for tilting the support frame is provided on the support frame above the at least one support element.
4. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the at least one support element is comprises a loosely rotatable support roller arranged centrally and parallel to the rotational axis of the driving wheels in the working direction.
5. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the at least one support element comprises two loosely rotatable support wheels the axes of which are arranged parallel to the rotational axis of the driving wheels.
6. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the gear is arranged between two supporting plates.
7. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the driving motor for the driving wheels is arranged on the gear.
8. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the separating knife is fixed on a mounting plate which is mounted to the supporting plates and on which a driving motor for the separating knife is arranged.
9. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein a drive with an intermittent pivoting movement is provided for the separating knife.

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10. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the support frame comprises two legs arranged with a distance between each other, each of which comprising a cantilever arm for mounting a support element.